

Soil Survey of Scotland

Strathdon

Sheet 37

Land Capability for Agriculture

CLASS DESCRIPTIONS

DIVISION DESCRIPTIONS

LAND SUITED TO ARABLE CROPPING

LAND CAPABLE OF PRODUCING A VERY WIDE RANGE OF CROPS

Cropping is highly flexible and includes the more exacting crops such as winter harvested vegetables (cauliflower, brussels sprouts, leeks). The level of yield is consistently high. Soils are usually well-drained deep loams, sandy loams, silty loams or their related humic variants with good reserves of moisture. Sites are level or gently sloping and the climate is favourable. There are no or only very minor physical limitations affecting agricultural use.



Not divided

LAND CAPABLE OF PRODUCING A WIDE RANGE OF CROPS

Cropping is very flexible and a wide range of crops can be grown but the land may be unsuited to winter harvested crops. The level of yield is high but less consistently obtained than on Class 1 land due to the effects of minor limitations affecting cultivation, crop growth or harvesting. The limitations include, either singly or in combination, slight workability or wetness problems, slightly unfavourable soil structure or texture, moderate slopes or slightly unfavourable climate. The limitations are always minor in their effects and land in the class is highly productive.



Not divided

LAND CAPABLE OF PRODUCING A MODERATE RANGE OF CROPS

Land in this class is capable of producing good yields of a narrow range of crops, principally cereals and grass, and/or moderate yields of a wider range including potatoes, some vegetable crops (e.g. field beans and summer harvested brassicae) and oil seed rape. The degree of variability between years will be greater than is the case for Classes 1 and 2, mainly due to interactions between climate, soil and management factors affecting the timing and type of cultivations, sowing and harvesting. The moderate limitations require careful management and include wetness, restrictions to rooting depth, unfavourable structure or texture, strongly sloping ground, slight erosion or a variable climate. The range of soil types within the class is greater than for previous classes.



Land in this division is capable of producing consistently high yields of a narrow range of crops (principally cereals and grass) and/or moderate yields of a wider range (including potatoes, field beans and other vegetables and root crops). Short grass leys are common.



The land is capable of average production but high yields of barley, oats and grass are often obtained. Other crops are limited to potatoes and forage crops. Grass leys are common and reflect the increasing growth limitations for arable crops and degree of risk involved in their production.

LAND CAPABLE OF PRODUCING A NARROW RANGE OF CROPS

The land is suitable for enterprises based primarily on grassland with short arable breaks (e.g. barley, oats, forage crops). Yields of arable crops are variable due to soil, wetness or climatic factors. Yields of grass are often high but difficulties of production or utilisation may be encountered. The moderately severe levels of limitation restrict the choice of crops and demand careful management. The limitations may include moderately severe wetness, occasional damaging floods, shallow or very stony soils, moderately steep gradients, moderate erosion risk, moderately severe climate or interactions of these which increase the level of farming risk.



Land in this division is suited to rotations which, although primarily based on ley grassland, include forage crops and cereals for stock feed. Yields of grass are high but difficulties of utilisation and conservation may be encountered. Other crop yields are very variable and usually below the national average.



The land is primarily grassland with some limited potential for other crops. Grass yields can be high but difficulties of conservation or utilisation may be severe, especially in areas of poor climate or on very wet soils. Some forage cropping is possible and, when the extra risks involved can be accepted, an occasional cereal crop.

LAND SUITED ONLY TO IMPROVED GRASSLAND AND ROUGH GRAZINGS